WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Audio-visual animation agreement with Canada

†*561. SHRI VIJAY SINGH YADAV: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that with the audio-visual animation agreement with Canada there is possibility of business of more than 150 million dollar every year;

(b) if so, the details thereof, together with the steps taken in this regard; and

(c) the details of the revenue earned by the country through the animation business as well as its export during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) and (b) The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has received a proposal to enter into an Audio-Visual Co-production agreement with the Government of Canada, which is still at draft stage. While no specific numerical projections regarding business can be made at this point of time, there appears to be a possibility of significant potential benefits.

(c) Data regarding break-up of revenue earned by the entertainment industry is not maintained by this Ministry. However, according to industry sources, supported by the National Association of Software and Service Companies, India exported animation and related software worth approximately US$ 100 million during the year 2001-02.

Classical music programme by National Aids Control Organisation

†*566. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned, "Shastriya Sangeet Karyakram per lut raha hai AIDS niyaantran kosh", which appeared in the Rashtriya Sahara, dated the 13th March, 2002;

(b) if so, the expenditure incurred, so far, by the National AIDS Control Organisation (NACO) towards sponsoring classical music programme on Doordarshan and for how long this programme is proposed to be sponsored; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) the success achieved by the classical music programme in controlling AIDS?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. C.P. THAKUR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. During the first phase of the National AIDS Control Project, Doordarshan was referring various programmes for sponsorship by NACO as a part of its IEC component of the national programme. A Technical Committee consisting of Doordarshan officials and a representative of NACO used to recommend funding from the national programme for production and telecast on Doordarshan. As a part of this strategy, Doordarshan has recommended, based on the opinion of the Technical Committee, the programme of 'Spirit of Unity Concerts for National Integration' for telecast in 1998. Since then this programme was telecast on Doordarshan in various prime time slots for varying period. NACO has incurred an expenditure of Rs. 328.79 lakhs, which was released to Doordarshan for this programme. Out of this amount, Rs. 126.29 lakhs were telecast charges of Doordarshan and Rs. 102.50 lakhs were production charges which were paid by Doordarshan to the producer. As of now, the telecast has been discontinued by Doordarshan.

(c) IEC (Information Education Communication) forms a very important component of prevention of spread of HIV/AIDS as there is no cure for the disease. Through IEC, an attempt is made to bring about behavioural change, which is the only prevention measure for people at risk. The IEC strategy followed by National AIDS Control Organisation is multi-pronged and caters to many segments like the youth, women, migrants, industrial labourers, truckers and other sections of the society. Different media vehicles like Radio, TV, Press, Print Publicity, Field Publicity, Interpersonal Techniques, etc. are being utilized by NACO to approach different segments of the population.

This classical music programme "Spirit of Unity Concerts" addressed a niche audience of music lovers. The Programme itself was recommended by a joint committee, consisting mainly of Doordarshan officials and one member from NACO. Only on receipt of acceptance of the quality of the programme by Doordarshan, NACO provided funds to Doordarshan for Telecast and Production of the programme. The programme format involved performances by the best musical talents of the country including Pt. Jasraj, Balamurali Krishna, M.S. Subbalaxmi, Hari Prasad Chaurasia, Shiv Kumar Sharma, Alka Yagnik and others. Within the programme, the performing musicians also gave messages on AIDS.

Further NACO was utilising 150 seconds of Free Commercial Time offered between the programme for airing various spots on AIDS messages developed by NACO. These spots were being aired on prime time. Considering the large Free Commercial Time available to NACO, the cost of buying these spots directly from Doordarshan, would have been much higher than the telecast charges paid to Doordarshan. Hence, the programme was a cost effective strategy for airing messages on AIDS on the prime time of Doordarshan.

Awareness is generated on a cumulative basis with inputs from many sources. Similarly, controlling the AIDS problem requires a multi dimensional approach in which IEC forms a very integral part. The nationwide general population Behavioural Surveillance Survey (BSS) conducted by ORG in 2001, has revealed that Television is the most watched media in the country with 64.5% of the people watching it at least once a month. It may be also noted that HIV/AIDS awareness in terms of having heard of the disease has increased from 40.3% among females (NFHS-1998-99) to 70% (BSS-2001) at the national level.

Manipulating the PGI Act

†*567. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that members of Parliament and PGI Employees Union, Chandigarh have drawn his attention regarding the present Director, PGI, Chandigarh who has shown the age as 62 years in place of 60 years in the notification by manipulating the PGI Act and the decision of Governing Body; and

(b) if so, the officer responsible for mis-recording the decision and whether any action has been taken against him?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. C.P. THAKUR): (a) and (b) Complaints were received alleging that Professor S.K. Sharma, Professor of Urology at PGIMER, Chandigarh, was appointed Director, PGIMER, Chandigarh, on 2.3.2000 upto the superannuation age of 62 years instead of 60 years. The Institute Body of PGIMER, Chandigarh, in its meeting held on 5.1.2000 approved the recommendations of the Special Selection Committee to appoint Professor S.K. Sharma as Director, PGIMER, Chandigarh, for a term of five years or till he attains the age of superannuation, whichever is earlier. The superannuation age of the members of the teaching faculty of

†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.